

LABOR DAY A LEGAL HOLIDAY.

MAY 15, 1894.—Referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

Mr. MCGANN, from the Committee on Labor, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany H. R. 28.]

The Committee on Labor, to whom was referred the bills (H. R. 28 and H. R. 334) making the first Monday in September, known as "labor day," a legal holiday, beg leave to report as follows:

The bills provide, in substance, that the first Monday in September in each year, being the day celebrated and known as labor day, be made a legal public holiday.

The use of national holidays is to emphasize some great event or principle in the minds of the people by giving them a day of rest and recreation, a day of enjoyment, in commemoration of it. By making one day in each year a public holiday for the benefit of workingmen the equality and dignity of labor is emphasized. Nothing is more important to the public weal than that the nobility of labor be maintained. So long as the laboring man can feel that he holds an honorable as well as a useful place in the body politic, so long will he be a loyal and faithful citizen.

The celebration of Labor Day as a national holiday will in time naturally lead to an honorable emulation among the different crafts beneficial to them and to the whole public. It will tend to increase the feeling of common brotherhood among men of all crafts and callings, and at the same time kindle an honorable desire in each craft to surpass the rest.

There can be no substantial objection to making one day in the year a national holiday for the benefit of labor. The labor organizations of the whole country, representing the great body of our artisan population, request it. They are the ones most interested. They desire it and should have it. If the farmers, manufacturers, and professional men are indifferent to the measure, or even oppose it, which there is no reason to believe, that still would constitute no good objection, for their work can be continued on holidays as well as on other days if they so desire it. Workingmen should have one day in the year peculiarly their own. Nor will their employers lose anything by it. Workingmen are benefited by a reasonable amount of rest and recreation. Whatever makes a workingman more of a man makes him more useful as a craftsman.

The first Monday in September is known as labor day and is recognized as a legal holiday in Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Alabama, Delaware, Oregon, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin, and Washington. In all

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these States the legislatures have passed a law recognizing labor day as a legal holiday. The Federal Government seems to have confined its duties in the premises to enacting laws for legal holidays in the District of Columbia. Christmas, the 1st day of January, the 22d day of February, the 30th day of May, and the 4th day of July are now made by law public holidays. The bill simply provides that the first Monday of September in each year is made a legal holiday to all intents and purposes in the same manner as Christmas and other holidays now provided by the United States statutes.

Your committee respectfully recommend that bill H. R. 28 be passed.

